

## **THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY IN BOGOTA, COLOMBIA**

### **REQUESTS PROJECT PROPOSAL TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE CAUSED BY COCA CULTIVATION AND NARCOTICS THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 31, 2013**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The mission of the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), and Embassy Bogota's Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS), is to minimize the impact of international crime and illegal drugs on the United States, its citizens, and partner nations by providing effective foreign assistance and fostering global cooperation.

INL combines forces with other USG and international agencies and takes a regional approach to widespread problems. INL also encourages more developed governments to take responsibility as equal partners in global efforts to combat transnational crime, include drug trafficking. The Bureau's priority programs support three inter-related objectives:

- **COUNTER-NARCOTICS:** Disrupt the overseas production and trafficking of illicit drugs through targeted counternarcotics and institution-building assistance and coordination with foreign nations and international organizations,
- **BUILDING CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS:** Institutionalize rule of law by developing and expanding criminal justice systems to strengthen partner country law enforcement and judicial effectiveness, foster cooperation in legal affairs, and advance respect for human rights; and
- **TRANSNATIONAL CRIME:** Minimize the impact of transnational crime and criminal networks on the U.S. and its allies through enhanced international cooperation and foreign assistance.

#### **APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY**

- 1) Applicants must be a registered non-profit organization (NGO) based in Colombia; or
- 2) From "international organizations" as defined by 22 U.S.C. § 288, that meet the minimum eligibility criteria; and
- 3) Applicants must have a unique DUNS number (and registered in the Central Contractor Register system to qualify to receive a federal assistance award (<https://www.bpn.gov/>)).
- 4) Preference given to organizations whose mission involves the environment and/or has experience in conducting environmental programs.

#### **PURPOSE OF PROGRAM**

NAS Bogota is seeking applications from qualified organizations to collaboratively plan and carry out three activities promoting awareness of the environmental damage caused by illicit coca cultivation and narcotics. The cultivation of illegal drugs has serious negative consequences on Colombia's plant and animal diversity. Three hectares of forests are cleared, burned, and destroyed for every one hectare of coca or poppy plants grown in

Colombia. In the last ten years alone, 1.6 million hectares of forest have been destroyed by the spread of illegal drugs. Because the process of burning forest land to plant coca weakens the soil, growers depend on highly toxic pesticides to cultivate their illicit crops. The chemicals used in the production of cocaine also harm the environment and contaminate sources of water.

## **THEMES AND ACTIVITIES**

Grant applicants can submit proposals that address all or part of the project themes and activities listed below (meaning a local NGO that lacks the capacity to perform all requested activities could submit a proposal to implement those activities within its capacity). Proposals may include new and/or expanded ideas but must, at a minimum, complete the themes and activities listed in Section I, below (unless the paragraph explicitly uses “should” when describing a particular item).

NAS invites organization(s) to submit proposals that will address the following:\*

- I. Enhance Community Awareness on Environmental Issues and Narcotics
- II. Protecting the Environmental Bio-Diversity of Colombia

## **MANDATORY ACTIVITY**

The NAS annual photo contest in Colombia – Colombia, Pais de Contrastes. The photo contest aims to show the biodiversity of Colombia, and also the immense ecological and environmental damage the production and transport of illicit crops causes in the country. NAS is currently in the third year of this extremely successful contest, with thousands of Colombians participating yearly. This particular contest is held in partnership with the Embassy of the United States of America in Colombia, the National Police of Colombia, and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, with the support of El Tiempo and Aviator. Winner ceremony tentatively scheduled to be in summer 2013. Contest rules are already established and can be provided upon request by applicants.

The recipient organization will be responsible, in collaboration with partners, for managing the contest website and email inbox, downloading and filing photos, communications with participants, obtaining prizes for the winners, facilitating judging process, coordinating advertising and publicity, and arranging the winners’ award ceremony. The decision of winning photos must be made by a technical committee where each partner will have a representative.

### **Applicant Responsibilities:**

- Management of website, Facebook (FB) page, email account
  - Plus updating FB page with relevant environmental material
  - Interacting with target audience via webchat, FB chat, tweets, CoNX streams
  - Live stream interviews with environmental ambassadors and other personalities
- Correspondence with audience, participants on FB, and email
- Downloading/filing photos from email account
- Procuring/obtaining contest prizes
- Facilitating judging process
- Weekly reports

## **OTHER EXAMPLES**

Film Contest/Festival addressing the above themes

Restoration/Reforestation Projects

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT:** One (1) impact assessment per activity.

\* The maximum award amount is \$50,000.

\*\*The Project Duration shall be twelve (12) months. This activity may be extended for another year based on recipient's good performance, INL priorities, funding availability and a timely request is made at a minimum of 60 days prior to the expiration of the grant award.

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Recipients **MUST** submit quarterly financial and performance progress reports in English. Reports are required as a means of evaluating the recipient's progress and utilization of resources. They are divided between a performance progress report and a financial status report.

A performance progress report compares actual to planned performance and indicates the progress made in accomplishing each assistance award task. The report should include relevant details for assessing the status of performance (i.e., a brief, factual summary description of the progress made). The performance progress reports must be accompanied by the *Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR)* Coversheet, Page 1.

Financial status reports provide a means of monitoring expenditures and comparing costs incurred with progress. Recipients must utilize the SF-425 *Federal Financial Report*, to report the status of funds for all non-construction projects or programs.

A copy of all quarterly financial and performance progress reports shall be emailed to the Grants Officer and the Grants Officer Representative as listed in the Grant/Cooperative Agreement, once awarded. Quarterly reports with a computer-based English translation will not be accepted.

Please note: It is the Department of State's policy that English is the official language of all documents. If quarterly reports are provided in both English and a foreign language, it must be stated in each version that the English language version is the controlling version.

### **DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

This RFA is limited to organizations based in Colombia. NAS will not fund projects related to partisan political activity, charitable activity and humanitarian aid, fundraising campaigns, commercial projects, those involving individuals not affiliated with an organization that can provide sustainability to the project, and those that duplicate existing projects.

Proposals should be submitted in English, or be accompanied by an English translation. (Applications with a computer-based English translation will not be accepted.) Proposals must include a project narrative, short descriptions of past relevant projects, and a detailed budget. Supporting documents may be in Spanish. **All submissions must be forwarded to the following U.S. Embassy contact by April 31st, 2013:**

U.S. Embassy, Narcotics Affairs Section  
Carrera 45 No. 24B-27  
Bogota, Colombia  
Email:  
Contact Persons:  
Alternative Contact:

Please retain a time stamped copy of the proposal at the time submitted to ensure that you retain evidence that the grant was submitted ahead of the deadline. Proposals are requested at the earliest and applicants are requested not to wait for the deadline prior to submission. Grant application forms are attached. If you have additional questions or need consultation on your project proposal, please contact NAS through the emails above.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

Proposals should contain clearly formulated goals and target groups, and show the ability of the applying organization to carry out the project aims. The proposal must contain a section explaining how the impact of the project will be evaluated. While lack of sustainability will not disqualify a project from selection, projects that are sustainable and create lasting positive effects will be evaluated based on the Review Criteria as listed below.

The U.S. Embassy shall review all proposals for eligibility. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance of Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with INL's Grants Division. INL reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial information regarding the proposal. Panelists may make conditions and recommendations on any given proposal in order to enhance the proposed program.

Proposals will be funded based on an evaluation of how the proposal meets the solicitation review criteria, U.S. foreign policy objectives, and the priority needs of INL/NAS. A State Department Review Committee will evaluate proposals submitted under this request. Proposals will be scored based on the applicants response to each Review Criteria listed below. Review criteria will include:

### **1) Quality of Ideas**

Proposals should be responsive to the solicitation and exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's/NAS' mission.

### **2) Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives**

A relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity of the organization. The work plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable and achievable. For complete proposals, applicants must provide a monthly timeline of project activities.

### **3) Program Evaluation Plan**

Programs should demonstrate the capacity for engaging in impact assessments and providing objectives with measurable outputs and outcomes.

### **4) Institution's Record and Capacity**

The Bureau/NAS will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project objectives. Roles and responsibilities of primary staff should be provided.

### **5) Cost Effectiveness**

The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Cost sharing is strongly encouraged but not required. (NOTE: In reviewing similar projects, the Review Panel will evaluate proposals that request lower budgets based on the Review Criteria of Cost Effectiveness).

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO APPLICANTS**

The information contained in this solicitation is binding and may not be modified by any Bureau/NAS representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau/NAS that contradicts this language will not be binding. Issuance of the solicitation does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. The Bureau/NAS reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program evaluation requirements.

Once the Request for Proposals deadline has passed, U.S. Government officials - including those in the Bureau, the Department and at embassies/missions overseas - must not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed. Applicants will be notified by the INL/NAS Grants Officer only with regard to the status of an application. Funding commitments can only be made by an INL/NAS Grants Officer. All other commitments from any representative other than an INL/NAS Grants Officer will be deemed unauthorized.